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THE SUDAN AMIS HQs

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AMIS

*Information Department*

**PRESS RELEASE**

**AMBASSADOR KINGIBE INAUGURATES COMMITTEE**

**OF INQUIRY INTO ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

**BY AMIS FORCES**

The Special Representative of the African Union Commission Chairperson in the Sudan, Amb. Baba Gana Kingibe today inaugurated the members of the Committee of Inquiry into allegations of sexual abuse levelled against members of the African Union Mission Forces in Darfur in a documentary broadcast by the British Television Channel 4 in March, 2006. The eight member Committee is headed by Ms. Winnie Byanyima as Chairperson. Ms. Byanyima is an internationally renowned Women's rights activist who has worked as adviser and consultant to several UN and other international agencies and academic institutions. She is currently the Director, Women, Gender and Development in the Office of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. The other members are all experts in their own field and include representatives from the UN, the European Union, and the NGO Community. The Committee which has wide ranging terms of reference is given four weeks to submit their report.

The full text of Ambassador Kingibe's address and the response of Ms. Byanyima, Chairperson of the Committee are reproduced herewith.

**Moussa Alzouma Hamani**

**Information Officer**

**AMIS HQ**

**16<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

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***Information Department***

**AN ADDRESS  
BY AMBASSADOR BABA GANA KINGIBE,  
SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHAIRPERSON  
OF THE AU COMMISSION AND  
HEAD OF THE AFRICAN UNION MISSION IN SUDAN (AMIS)  
AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY TO  
INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCTS AGAINST  
MEMBERS OF THE AU FORCES IN DARFUR.**

**AMIS HQ, 16TH APRIL, 2006**

You are aware that I issued a Press Statement on 4th April as a result of a news item on British Channel 4 Television. The television report alleged incidences of sexual misconduct including rape and child abuse against the African Union Forces in Darfur.

In that Press Statement, I committed to the establishment of a Committee of Inquiry to investigate these allegations and it is with that purpose that I speak with you today.

This Committee comprises

- 1) Mrs. Winnie Byanyima, Director, Women, Gender and Development, AU Commission, as Chairperson, and the following as members;

- 2) Mr. Germain Baricako, Adviser on Humanitarian and Human Rights Affairs, AMIS HQ;
- 3) Brig. Gen. Henry Onyango, Team Leader, force Generation, Darfur Integrated Task Force, African Union Commission;
- 4) Mr. John Lansley, European Union Police Adviser to AMIS;
- 5) A representative of the UN;
- 6) A representative from the NGO Community;
- 7) A representative of UNIFEM; and
- 8) Dr. Niil Wallace Bruce, AMIS Legal Adviser will serve as member/Secretary.

Requests have been made to the Organisations I have mentioned and we expect their nominees to join you soon.

#### Terms of Reference

The Committee shall, among other tasks,

- a. Examine the content of the Channel 4 documentary and establish the veracity or otherwise of the allegations contained therein;

- b. Identify, if any, those responsible for the violations, and make recommendations on appropriate sanctions;
- c. Examine any other matter which in the view of the Committee is relevant to the allegations under investigation and make appropriate recommendations there on; and
- d. Make recommendations on how to strengthen the existing AMIS Code of Conduct especially those regarding the treatment of local inhabitants as contained in the AMIS Standing Operational Procedures (SOP), including Mission specific recommendations.

#### Other Provisions

- i) The Committee shall adopt its rules of procedure.
- ii) The Committee may co-opt any person whom it believes will assist in the discharge of its work,
- iii) It shall summon any witness who may help in the discharge of its enquiry,
- iv) The Committee shall submit its report to the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission within four weeks of its first sitting.

Your role as committee members is to bring your expertise and knowledge to the enquiry, providing that skill needed to fulfill the terms of reference.

I therefore direct you to concentrate your inquiry on the allegations made during the broadcast, although you should be mindful that if in the course of the investigation, any other issue comes to light, they should be reported for consideration and if necessary, for further investigation.

You will need to work quickly but with sensitivity and purpose to establish the required report. In this effort, you may wish to be guided by our SOP containing the Code of Conduct reflected in the Memorandum of Understanding we have signed with the Troop Contributing Countries and with which all our personnel are expected to be familiar. You may also wish to be guided by the Report prepared for the UN General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations in March 2005 by Prince Zeid Al-Hussein, UNSG's Adviser on the "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects". The Secretary General's Report to the Fifty-Ninth Session of the General Assembly on "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" may also be of interest to the Committee.

I emphasise my commitment that you work expeditiously and transparently, providing a comprehensive investigation into the matter. This is why I included in your membership also those not working with us in the AMIS. That is also why I excluded members of our Forward Headquarters and the Sectors in Darfur from participation as Committee members. Those of you selected have been chosen by virtue of your proven integrity, experience and commitment.

I, therefore, wish to remind the Chairperson and members of this Committee that you have a very important task, and, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the people of Darfur, and the International Community as a whole expect from you a professional, comprehensive and

objective investigation into the matter. In this way, you will continue in the fulfillment of the expectation of service and professionalism that the people of Darfur have been receiving from the African Union Forces. As I said in my Statement of the 4th April, our forces have served with great zeal and commitment and have remained true to the values of not only their own cultures which abhor these heinous crimes, but also to the customs and the cherished traditions of the people they are in Darfur to serve and protect. In this context, we are determined not to allow any deviant action by the few to shake the commitment of the vast majority to the noble cause which brought us to Darfur. We are indeed resolute and firm in this determination that we shall not spare any efforts to unravel allegations of this nature, as we had indeed done so in the past when similar allegations were thoroughly investigated but found to be unsubstantiated.

I wish to seize this opportunity to urge all my AMIS Colleagues to shun any action that could tarnish the exemplary record which we have set through devotion, hard work and above all self sacrifice. We are here as an integral part of efforts by the international community to bring about reconciliation and restore peace and security to Darfur. Good conduct and discipline should therefore remain our watch-words at all times. The success of this Mission is underpinned by adherence to standards of integrity and correct ethical behavior, which are the cornerstones of our Code of conduct. I am therefore confident that the work of this Committee will reinforce these values.

May I finally thank the Chairperson and members of the Committee for agreeing to serve. I assure you that all members of the African Union Mission in the Sudan have been instructed to fully cooperate with the Inquiry. I again urge all others outside our Organisation whom you may approach, to similarly extend their cooperation to you. Do not hesitate to ask

for any assistance or facility that you may require for the effective discharge of your onerous responsibility.

**Thank you.**

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**Response to the Statement by the Special Representative of the  
Chairperson of the AU Commission and Head of AMIS at the Inauguration  
of the Committee of Enquiry to Investigate Allegations of Sexual  
Misconduct against Members of the AU Forces in Darfur.**

*By Ms Winnie Byanyima, AU Director, Women, Gender and  
Development*

Your Excellency Ambassador Kingibe  
Colleagues, members of the Committee  
Members of AMIS present here

On behalf of my colleagues on the Committee and on my own behalf,  
I would like to confirm our acceptance to serve on this important  
Committee to investigate allegations of sexual misconduct against  
members of the AU forces in Darfur. I would like to assure you that  
we will serve to the best of our ability.

As you well know, the AU has set very high standards with regard to  
the respect of human rights and especially women and children's  
human rights. Indeed the promotion of gender equality is one of the  
principles in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. In addition,  
African Heads of State and Government signed the Protocol to the  
African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of  
Women in Africa in Maputo in 2003, where they undertook to respect

the rules of international humanitarian law in armed conflict and to protect women asylum seekers, women in IDPs and women in all situations of armed conflict from all forms of violence, rape and sexual exploitation. They repeat and underline the same commitments in other African instruments such as their Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa signed in Addis Ababa in 2004. In fact the Au is seen as a global leader in terms of standard setting for the respect of women's human rights.

It is against this background and with these yardsticks that we will carry out this investigation. We cannot and will not drop the standards set by our leaders. The rape of one woman, the abuse of one child is a crime that should not go unpunished because it is a betrayal of the values that Africans espouse and their aspirations to full and dignified lives. It is our duty to ensure, through this investigation that no errant soldier compromises the best efforts of thousands of committed Africans working hard and giving their best to this AMIS operation. Rape is a heinous crime. We will also ensure that such a crime is not used by anyone to pursue other objectives.

We have perused the terms of reference and understand that our mandate goes beyond identifying whether or not a crime of a sexual nature took place and if so, to identify and propose sanctions for the culprits. We will examine the institutional framework in place for dealing with rape and other forms of gender-based violence with a view to strengthening it, if necessary.

I would like to assure you, Your Excellency, that the Committee, under my leadership, will undertake its duty with professionalism and sensitivity.

Tomorrow we will begin our work by holding an informal consultation to map out the tasks before us. We will discuss a possible timetable of work and assess the technical resources we will need for the investigation. Our committee will meet formally as soon as possible and we will work quickly but carefully to try to meet your timeline.

Once again, I thank you, Your Excellency, for placing your confidence in us and assure you of our best efforts.

I thank you.